

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2044

INFO AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

S E C R E T BANGKOK 5134

EXDIS

DEPARTMENT PLEASE PASS CINCPAC AND USSAG

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MARR, TH

SUBJ: CAMBODIA

REF : (A) STATE 66977; (B) BANGKOK 4888 (NOTAL)

BEGIN SUMMARY: WE DO NOT BELIEVE PROBLEM OF THAI COOPERATION IN EVACUATION OPERATIONS FROM CAMBODIA WILL BE A MAJOR ONE. THE THAI ARE AWARE OF OUR ORIGINAL PLANS IN SOME DETAIL AND HAVE ASSENTED TO THEM. PROBLEMS ARE FORESEEABLE IN CONNECTION WITH EVACUATION LARGE NUMBER OF THIRD COUNTRY NATIONS ADDED RECENTLY, BUT WE CANNOT DEFINE THESE PROBLEMS OR RECOMMEND HOW TO DEAL WITH THEM IN THE ABSENCE OF INFORMATION WE HAVE SOUGHT BUT NOT YET RECEIVED (REF B). END SUMMARY

1. ON 1 FEBRUARY 1974, MISSION, THROUGH LETTER FROM COMUSMACTHAI GENERAL MELLEN, ACQUAINTED SUPREME COMMAND WITH REASONABLE DETAILED US EVACUATION PLANS FOR CAMBODIA. THAI ARE AWARE OF THE FACT THAT THESE PLANS INCLUDE SOME THIRD COUNTRY NATIONALS, FOR WHOM THAI WERE TOLD US MISSION WOULD ASSUME CARE AND WELFARE RESPONSIBILITY.

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2. A MONTH AGO, COMUSMACTHAI AND POMIL COUNS IN CONVERSATION WITH SUPREME COMMAND CHIEF OF STAFF, GENERAL KRIANGSAK CHAMANAN, REMINDED KRIANGSAK OF MELLE LETTER. THEY TOLD KRIANGSAK THAT THE SECURITY SITUATION IN CAMBODIA MADE IT NECESSARY REVIEW EVACUATION PLANS. CURRENT PLANS, THEY SAID, WERE ESSENTIALLY THE SAME AS THOSE DESCRIBED IN THE MELLE LETTER. KRIANGSAK INDICATED UNDERSTANDING OF THIS AND SAID HE SAW NO DIFFICULTY IN IT. (FACT THAT US EVACUATION WILL INCLUDE SOME THAI OFFICIALS SHOULD REENFORCE THAILAND'S COOPERATIVENESS.)

3. IN REF B, WE REQUESTED INFORMATION CONCERNING LARGE NUMBERS OF CAMBODIANS, BOTH US EMPLOYEES AND DEPENDENTS AND KEY CAMBODIAN PERSONNEL, RECENTLY ADDED TO EVACUATION PLAN. WE DO NOT BELIEVE THE THAI WOULD PREVENT ARRIVAL OF SUCH PERSONNEL IN THAILAND, BUT THEIR WILLINGNESS TO RETAIN THEM HERE IS HIGHLY DOUBTFUL. WE HAVE NOT RAISED THIS MATTER WITH SUPREME COMMAND BECAUSE WE DO NOT KNOW USG PLANS FOR THESE CAMBODIANS, E.G. WHETHER IT WOULD BE OUR INTENT TO MOVE THEM ONWARD QUICKLY ONCE EXTRACTED FROM CAMBODIA, OR WHETHER THEY WOULD BE EXPECTED TO REMAIN IN THAILAND FOR SOME TIME, AND WHO WOULD TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THEIR WELFARE WHILE HERE. WE WOULD BE IN A BETTER POSITION TO PROVIDE ASSESSMENT REQUESTED IN PARA 3, REF A, IF WE HAD ANSWERS TO THOSE QUESTIONS.

4. RE PARA 4, REF A, SIMILAR QUESTIONS ARISE. WE WOULD EXPECT THAILAND TO BE GENERALLY COOPERATIVE, BUT FOR PURPOSES OF OUR OWN ADVANCE PLANNING AND ANY NECESSARY COORDINATION WITH RTG, WE REQUIRE CONSIDERABLY MORE INFORMATION THAN WE NOW HAVE ON NUMBERS AND NATIONALITIES OF PEOPLE INVOLVED, ULTIMATE DESTINATION, CURRENT DOCUMENTATION, EXTENT OF US RESPONSIBILITY FOR SUPPORT, ETC.

5. CURRENT THAI ATTITUDE TOWARD CAMBODIA IN GENERAL IS ONE OF WATCHFUL AND NERVOUS WAITING. WHILE RTG
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HOPES NON-COMMUNIST LON NOL-TYPE GOVERNMENT WILL SURVIVE, RTG IS BECOMING INCREASINGLY DUBIOUS AND THEREFORE WISHES TO LEAVE ITS OPTIONS AS WIDE OPEN AS POSSIBLE IN TERMS OF RELATIONS WITH A POSSIBLE SUCCESSOR GOVERNMENT. ITS PUBLIC STATEMENTS, AS COPIOUSLY REPORTED BY US, ARE AIMED AT THIS LATER OBJECTIVE, BUT ITS LACK OF ACTION UP TO THIS POINT TO INTERFERE WITH OUR SUPPORT ACTIVITIES REFLECTS

BOTH THE FORMER OBJECTIVE AND RTG'S UNWILLINGNESS
TO CONFRONT THE US. FOR ALL OF THESE REASONS,
RATHER THAN FORMALLY SEEKING OFFICIAL "CLARIFICATION"
OF RTG'S ATTITUDE TOWARD CAMBODIA, AND PARTICULARLY TOWARD
US SUPPORT OF CAMBODIA OUT OF THAILAND, WE PREFER TO GATHER
IT IN OTHER WAYS. (A FOLLOWING TELEGRAM DESCRIBING CHARGE'S
CONVERSATION MARCH 27 WITH FORMIN CHARTCHAI SHEDS LIGHT ON THIS
SUBJECT.)

6. WE NOTE GUIDANCE CONTAINED PARA 2, REF A, AND ARE
ALREADY FOLLOWING IT.
MASTERS

NOTE BY OCT: NOT PASSED ABOVE ADDRESSEE.

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NNN

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